



Ministry of
Agriculture

Farm & Food Report

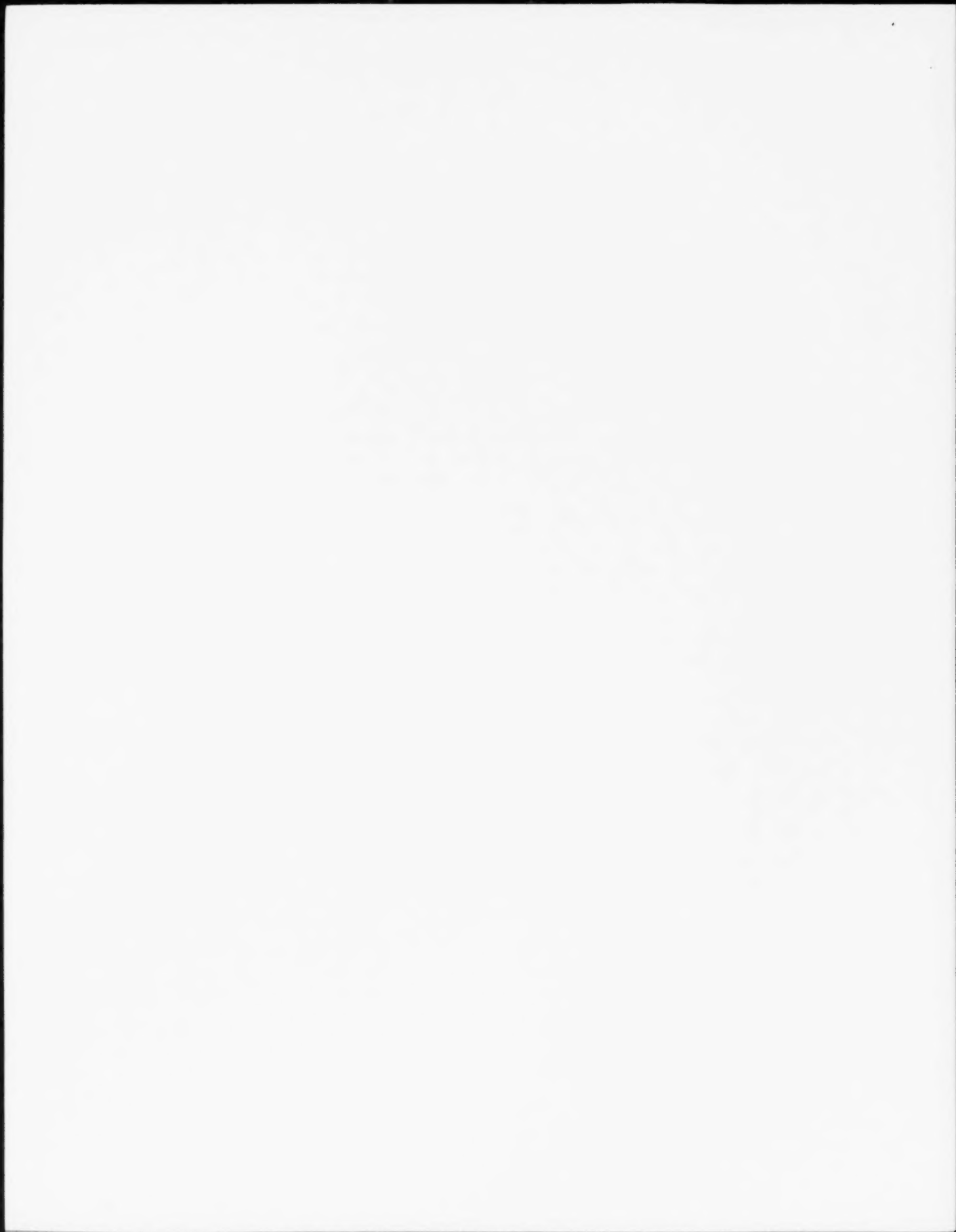
Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

INDEX

TOP HOLSTEINS LIVE THE HIGH LIFE ON OSLER-AREA FARM	08-01-01
LOG ON, SIP COFFEE, LEARN	08-01-02
CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH LOOKS TO THE PAST TO PREDICT THE FUTURE	08-01-03
AGRI-BUSINESS CREATES SUCCESSFUL SUCCESSION PLAN	08-01-04
SASKATCHEWAN STUDENTS TO SELL TORTILLAS TO MEXICO	08-01-05

Farm and Food Report is produced weekly by the Zapwell Communications Group
for Communications Branch, Saskatchewan Agriculture
Contact: Amanda Dauk
101-3085 Albert Street, REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN S4S 0B1
Telephone: (306) 787-5157, Fax: (306) 787-0216
Internet Page: <http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca>





Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 08-01-01
Week of January 7, 2008

TOP HOLSTEINS LIVE THE HIGH LIFE ON OSLER-AREA FARM

Life is good for the 20 competitive Holstein cows on Bryce Fisher's dairy farm near Osler. He maintains the special group as his star exhibits, and as a result, has collected a mantle full of ribbons, including Grand Champion Holstein at the 2007 Royal Winter Fair in Toronto.

Fisher's national champion is Silverridge Leduc Noleta, a cow he has been showing for six years.

"I bought her when she was about 10 months old, and she's five years old now," said Fisher. "At the calf shows, she did well. Then when she calved as a two-year-old, she calved with a perfect udder. We showed out west and she was undefeated; we took her to the Royal Winter Fair, and she was first there at that age. She was second at the Royal as a three-year-old and a four-year-old. And now – Grand Champion!"

The Fisher family is now in its third generation of dairy farming. The operation began in the 1950s with Bryce's grandfather; then his father, and, now, Bryce and fiancée Raquel Dyck operate the 600-acre farm. They milk approximately 150 cows, averaging some 28 kilograms of milk per cow per day.

However, there is a special group at Fisher's farm – his exhibition stock. Those 20 cows are kept in separate accommodations.

"We keep our cows ready to show year round," said Fisher. "They are housed separately, fed separately, and looked after separately. The other cows are on total mixed ration with silage. These cows don't get any of that. They're on first- and second-cut hay, beet pulp and 16-per-cent dairy ration. They are fed and managed totally for show purposes."

Showing Holsteins is an important part of Fisher's life and work.

"We work hard at it," he said. "With different cows, we've been grand champions at just about every western show at one time or another. I think we're just really competitive."

This year's entries at the Toronto Royal Winter Fair were no exception.

"We had 11 head there, and they were all in the top 10," said Fisher. "Out of Saskatchewan, we're probably the most competitive herd on the international scene. I've been going to the Royal for the past 10 years."

(more)

Fisher transports the show stock himself, so the appearance at the winter fair meant some 18 days on the road to go out, show the cows and return home.

Showing the animals, of course, is not just about ribbons: it's about business. The sale of embryos to breeders is an important part of his operation.

"It's a huge network of people," said Fisher. "The only way you can do it is by exhibiting at big shows."

He estimates potential buyers from some 160 countries were at the Royal Winter Fair and had a chance to see the quality of his stock. However, he is careful in managing his genetics business.

"We don't over-extend ourselves," he said. "We won't contract until we have embryos to sell. We just notify people when we have some."

As for Silverridge Leduc Noleta, she's back munching and milking in her VIP stall.

"She's just a great cow and we've had a lot of fun with her," said Fisher, with no small amount of pride.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Bryce Fisher, Owner
R and F Livestock Inc.
Phone: (306) 239-2233
E-mail: rnflivestock@sasktel.net



Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 08-01-02
Week of January 7, 2008

LOG ON, SIP COFFEE, LEARN

Producers across Canada are upgrading their skills and knowledge in the comfort of their own homes, thanks to a series of "agriwebinars" offered by the Canadian Farm Business Management Council. The current series of Internet seminars are hosted by Regina-based agri-tourism entrepreneur Claude-Jean Harel.

"They involve a presenter who comes from across Canada, the United States, Australia, or even Brazil," said Harel. "These are made for agricultural producers who are trying to decide on which future trends they should tap into. Basically, I guide the session, introduce the presenter and the topic, and make sure everything is flowing smoothly."

The agriwebinar series is presented every Monday at 12:00 p.m. eastern time.

"The neat thing about the format is that you can be in your office, in front of your computer," said Harel. "Even if you have a dial-up system, you can log on. You are joining a community of about 100 participants, listening to a presenter with a PowerPoint presentation, and the participants can ask the presenter questions, as well."

The question and answer portion of the seminar is enabled through the webinar platform.

"There's a little [text] box in the system that allows them to type in a question, and the presenter will address the questions in real time," explained Harel. "It's a very interactive format."

The topics of the webinars are wide-ranging. Subjects that have been or will be addressed include grain marketing fundamentals, biofuels, beneficial practices from outstanding farmers and agri-tourism.

The list of agriwebinar topics and dates can be found at www.farmcentre.com, the website of the Canadian Farm Business Management Council. The council was developed as a management resource for the industry. It is devoted to developing and distributing advanced farm management information.

The council receives support from Saskatchewan Agriculture, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and a number of private companies. It offers a virtual library of management education and information materials, including CD-ROMs, books and DVDs, as well as the webinars.

(more)

Harel, an agri-entrepreneur himself, said he enjoys being part of the series.

"I've been active in agri-tourism and rural tourism developments in North America. I deliver workshops, for instance, in places like Quebec, Alaska and Nebraska. I learn from it myself, and it allows me to stay in touch with producers who are looking to diversify their sources of income and develop greater awareness of what others are doing across the country."

If someone logs on for the webinar, they can slip into a virtual coffee meeting with other participants.

"There is a chat system that allows people to communicate with one another for about 15 minutes before the webinar starts," said Harel.

In addition, if the timing of the live presentation is not convenient, those interested can download the webinars at their convenience from the site. It requires signing up for a membership, but that comes without charge.

Harel said this learning resource is an evolving tool.

"We're all experimenting and hoping to stage a better and more rewarding webinar each time for the participants," he said.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Claude-Jean Harel
Great Excursions Co.
Phone: (306) 569-1571
E-mail: cj@greatexcursions.com
Website: www.farmcentre.com



Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 08-01-03
Week of January 7, 2008

CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH LOOKS TO THE PAST TO PREDICT THE FUTURE

Hearing the weather forecast for the coming week helps agricultural producers make decisions about regular farm activities like seeding, spraying, swathing and harvesting. But hearing the weather forecast for the coming decade could conceivably help them with all sorts of major decisions like seeding intentions, rotation patterns and insurance coverage, or perhaps whether to switch sectors altogether between grain, livestock and other agri-business opportunities.

That is the potential benefit of the climate prediction modeling being studied at the Saskatchewan Isotope Laboratory (SIL), located at the University of Saskatchewan.

SIL researchers are using innovative chemical and robotic sampling methods to recover historical environmental records from items such as clams, trees and fish ear stones. This data will then be compiled to create models of temperature, rainfall and snow pack that will hopefully enable scientists to better predict regional climate changes and weather patterns.

The research is expected to lead to the most detailed quantitative climate reconstruction of the western provinces to date. Dr. William Patterson, the director of the SIL, is excited about the work being done.

"If we are able to get a handle on how the weather system evolved over thousands of years and the patterns that have emerged, it can give us a very good understanding of what happened in the past and what may very well happen in the future," he said.

"We are never able to say with absolute certainty what the future will hold, but, through probabilities and percentages, we may, perhaps, be able to determine whether a given period of time is 'more likely' to be dry, or 'more likely' to be wet, and those sorts of things."

The findings could have a wide variety of potential applications, including helping agricultural producers and government policy-makers prepare for what may be coming down the road.

"It has applications for the insurance industry, applications for farm subsidies, applications for infrastructure preparedness," Patterson said.

Weather patterns, with their effects on water quality and quantity, also have relevance for municipalities.

(more)

In fact, Patterson noted that some U.S. cities along the eastern seaboard have incorporated climate modeling to help them decide whether to stockpile road salt in winters that are expected to be particularly severe with an abundance of precipitation.

"Arguably, there is no issue of greater scientific significance than gaining an understanding of the earth's climate system," he stated. "It is critical to all aspects of human society, and to the health of global and regional ecosystems, that we gain an understanding of past climates to understand and prepare for future climates."

According to Patterson, there is no better place to do that than at the SIL. "We definitely have a world-class facility here," he noted. It is the only one of its kind in Canada, and is recognized globally as a leader in climate record research.

That is one of the factors that encouraged Talisman Energy Inc. to donate \$300,000 to the facility recently, an investment that Patterson says will enable SIL researchers to delve deeper into the details of climate variation.

Talisman CEO Dr. Jim Buckee stated, "By unraveling historical climate change, we begin to understand both the natural and unexpected climates that have occurred in the past. The importance of this is not only how it places current changes within normal climate fluctuations, but also its impact on how we should react."

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Dr. William Patterson, Director
Saskatchewan Isotope Laboratory, University of Saskatchewan
Phone: (306) 966-5691
E-mail: bill.patterson@usask.ca



Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 08-01-04
Week of January 7, 2008

AGRI-BUSINESS CREATES SUCCESSFUL SUCCESSION PLAN

The first time Ewen Morrison went out to repair a grain elevator, he never imagined what the company he was building would grow into decades later.

Succession planning was the last thing on his mind that day in 1985. Welding cables that came up too short was the more pressing issue.

"My cables weren't long enough to reach the top of the elevator. I came home and my wife Shirley and I spent the whole night dragging old welding cables out and using rolls of electrical tape to tie them together so I could reach," Morrison said.

"When I look back, it is amazing. Now we buy welding cables by the spool, and we've probably got enough lying around to go halfway across Saskatchewan."

Today, like many family owned agri-businesses, Morrison is thinking a lot more about succession planning. It's no secret that the baby-boomers who built many of the businesses in our province are now starting to think about retirement.

That's why Morrison decided to change the ownership structure of the multi-million dollar company he and Shirley built. Fifteen members of the EMW Industrial management team recently executed what Morrison calls a "management buy-in."

EMW, headquartered in Saltcoats, serves the agricultural and mining industries in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The company has over 100 employees who provide maintenance, millwright and fabrication expertise to a wide range of industrial clients, including the grain and potash sectors.

It was to those employees who Ewen turned when the time came to think about succession planning. Selling to someone outside the EMW family did not appeal.

"Our company has been family-based, whether that is my own family or the family of people who work for us," he said. "It is a part of our culture. We worked hard to get here. The thought of selling out to someone who may possibly turn it into a company without a heart and soul was something I knew I didn't want to do."

(more)

The new owners will hold 48 per cent of EWM Industrial. The Morrisons and their children will retain majority ownership.

Morrison says the new management team will strengthen the company and reaffirm its commitment to the industries it serves.

"This management buy-in will provide stability and new capacity for EMW," he stated. "I will remain as CEO and will be fully engaged in the business. I still have a passion for the business. And the new ownership group is the same way. Heck, we have toast in the office at four in the morning sometimes. This is a great way to stay in the business and still have more time for Shirley and the family."

More time for Shirley is something Morrison is looking forward to. She was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis six years ago.

Morrison credits his wife for much of the success of the company. "She looked after the office and took care of the books. She was really instrumental in holding onto the reins. I was always going like mad, and she was holding onto the reins. It was a really good mix," he noted.

Looking back on where the company started, and looking forward to its future with new owners, Morrison cracks a smile.

"I had no idea we'd get here," he said. "It's just been a fun ride. It's kind of amazing how one day leads to the next."

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Ewen Morrison, CEO
EMW Industrial
Phone: (306) 744-2788
Website: www.emw.ca



Ministry of
Agriculture

Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 08-01-05
Week of January 7, 2008

SASKATCHEWAN STUDENTS TO SELL TORTILLAS TO MEXICO

There's an old expression to describe an excellent sales person: "She could sell sand in the desert." In the case of two University of Regina students, they're going to try selling tortillas made from Saskatchewan roasted barley to Mexico.

Students Chelsea Stulberg and Mathew Zook drew that assignment, thanks to winning the latest Bridges to International Practice competition at the University of Regina's Paul J. Hill School of Business. Associate Professor of Marketing Sylvain Charlebois stages the competition as an advanced marketing class, with real companies and real products.

"I meet with the executives of a company that is interested in getting involved with us before the semester actually starts," said Charlebois. "We look at what projects they want us to get involved with, and we design a course in accordance with that mandate. Every semester is different. We've had projects with five different companies, and the focus has gone from communications to channels to branding and market segmentation."

The latest project idea came from CanMar Grain Products of Regina. They agreed to sponsor the winning students' trip in exchange for their market research.

"They are in Mexico with their roasted flax, and they wanted to develop that market for roasted barley," Charlebois stated.

The class takes up a semester, during which students, generally in teams, do research on the product they've been given, and develop marketing proposals which are then presented near the end of the semester.

"They all submit their written proposals, and those proposals are read by me and the executives of the company," said Charlebois. "Then, a few teams are short-listed. Those are invited to present their proposals to a jury of six members, comprised of two representatives from the company, one from Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, and three professors from the faculty of business."

Once the winning proposal is chosen, the students must go to work in the international market chosen, aiming to create real results for the sponsoring company.

(more)

"The idea of this advanced class is that they can actually travel abroad and collect some primary data by interviewing people and meeting prospects and consumers in a foreign country," said Charlebois. In the case of CanMar, the students are proposing to market tortillas made from roasted barley as a more nutritional, and perhaps less expensive, alternative to the traditional corn tortillas favoured by Mexican consumers. The project means that the students, along with a faculty advisor and an executive from CanMar, will travel to the United States and Mexico in February.

"They will be meeting with potential distributors for their product in the southern U.S. as a launching pad to get into Mexico," said Charlebois. "They will move into Mexico to see whether there are potential retailers to market roasted barley."

Previous winners of the competition have traveled to China, Australia and Ukraine, among other countries, working on marketing products including Saskatchewan canola and pigs. In one case, the company involved ended up selling about 1,000 pigs through a joint venture in China.

According to Charlebois, in addition to finding new markets for the companies, the students are creating opportunities for themselves.

"We've had about 14 students who have had offers from the companies that got involved with us, so it's a great opportunity to keep our students here."

Professor Charlebois is looking for Saskatchewan companies with an interest in placing their products in offshore markets through his class. The sponsorship involves the time of the company executives and the payment of the winning students' travel costs.

"To my knowledge, this is the only program in Canada that brings students into a competitive environment where they get to travel free of charge," he said. "It's an equal opportunity for all of our students."

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Sylvain Charlebois, Associate Professor of Marketing
Paul J. Hill School of Business
University of Regina
Phone: (306) 337-2695
E-mail: sylvain.charlebois@uregina.ca